

CMS Connection

Illinois Department of Central Management Services' Monthly Newsletter



Director Janel L. Forde

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

It's already November, the leaves will soon begin to fall off the trees and the holiday season will be in full swing. However, the holidays are not the only thing we're celebrating around CMS. We are also cheerfully celebrating several awards received in the month of October in recognition of the hard work that you do every day, behind the scenes.

The **National Association of State Chief Administrators (NASCA)** awarded CMS with two **Innovation in State Government Awards**. This award recognizes state administration department programs, projects and initiatives that exemplify leading practices in the industry. The **Business Enterprise Program (BEP)** was recognized for transformation in procurement while the **Bureau of Property Management (BOPM)** was recognized nationally for their Chicago real estate optimization and transformation.

Additionally, NASCA recognized our **Bureaus of Benefits, Project Management** and **Rapids Results** with the **2021 State Spotlight Recognition, facilitated by Harvard University's Leadership for a Networked World, for our CMS University** and **Be Well** initiatives. These accomplishments would not have been possible without the continued dedication to excellence of the entire CMS team. I sincerely appreciate your commitment to this organization and the constituents of Illinois.

And as the weather changes, this month's newsletter will give us all tips on how to safely transition into winter in Illinois. Keep in mind that flu season is once again upon us, and with many COVID protocols still in place, the **access to flu shots for State Employees and Retirees** may be a little different in your area than in the past. However, there are many options available to employees and retirees to get their flu shots at State-sponsored clinics and health departments throughout Illinois, [click here](#) to find information.

New seasons also bring new workspaces. CMS continues to expand and develop new partnerships, as part of our broader property portfolio optimization work and as the disposition of the James R. Thompson Center (JRTC) continues. The agency is thrilled to see more colleagues move into our efficient, modern, **LEED Silver West Loop building**, located at 555 W. Monroe, Chicago. Inside, you will learn more about the third floor of the SJR building in Springfield which is currently being built out to accommodate **Rapid Results, CMS Legal** and **DoIT** staff assigned to CMS. These bureaus will be relocating from the Stratton Office building. Upon completion, this area will consist of over 8,000 square feet of modern office space. The targeted completion date of early November 2021. All staff will be relocated to the new space by December 31, 2021. Later in this issue you'll have the opportunity to see a few "before and after" pictures of some of **BOPM** and **BOAS** – Fleet's work in Springfield.

This month we honor our **CMS Veterans**, their dedication to the state of Illinois and this nation, beyond the agency. To our veterans and their families, we appreciate your commitment and heroism.

Be well and let's keep this great momentum going as we close out 2021.

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EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH - NOVEMBER 2021

Brandon Singer, Bureau of Personnel



The Department of Central Management Services (CMS) congratulates **Disabled Workers Program Coordinator Brandon Singer** for being Employee of the month. Brandon has overseen the Disability Resource Center for the State of Illinois for over seven

years at CMS working closely with the **Department of Human Services (DHS)** and the **Department of Human Rights (DHR)** to increase the number of qualified employees with disabilities working in state government. He has **managed the Successful Disabilities Opportunities Program, the Alternative Employment Program (AEP), and most recently the implementation of the Disabled Workers Trainee Program.**

His commitment and leadership has been prevalent in his work with various state committees and organizations such as, the Illinois Task Force on **Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities (EEOPD)**, the **Illinois Committee for Employees with Disabilities (ICED)**, and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program. His work has had a direct, continuing, and effective impact on increasing the number of Illinois residents with disabilities employed in state government, as well as a voice of advocacy and clarity for expanding accessibility and equity for all employees.

Brandon has worked closely with the Department of Human Resources to qualify individuals with disabilities for positions within State government as part of the **Successful Disability Opportunities (SDO)** program. His work in certifying hundreds of candidates as well as advising agencies on the need to pull Severely Disabled (SD) list with the Open Competitive (OC) list with the OC list has led to a **significant increase in the number of candidates hired from the SD list from 26 in 2019 to 58 placements in 2020.** As Brandon and CMS with DHS and DHR continue to educate agency personnel teams about the SDO program we anticipate those numbers to continue to increase, taking full advantage of an expanded applicant pool and enhancing the diversity in the state work force, with much of that success can be attributed to Brandon's work.

Through Brandon's leadership the **Diversity Enrichment Program** and the **CMS Veterans Outreach Program** have successfully adapted to the "virtual environment" necessary during the in-person restrictions of the pandemic. The outreach team working with Brandon have participated in over 31 virtual job fairs in Fiscal Year 2021, and numerous one on one by mail or phone counseling sessions. The adjustment of the outreach approach has assisted in reaching as many potential candidates as possible with onsite testing and counseling locations closed. **Brandon's commitment and dedication to getting the job done despite the obstacles is an example of his determination and belief in his work.**

In compliance with PA 101-540 Brandon led the CMS effort to design a training on disabled hiring for all state agency human resources (HR) staff. He led the CMS team in developing and providing the training to educate agency HR teams on the various programs and hiring opportunities available for individuals with disabilities. The training highlighted the process for the **Successful Disabilities Opportunities Program, the Alternative Employment Program, Accommodated Testing Program, and the Disabled Workers Trainee Program.** Brandon's commitment to communicating and sharing his expertise is critical to our ongoing efforts to educate state hiring staff on the various hiring opportunities for their agency.

Brandon Singer was also nominated and selected to receive the Inter Agency Committee on Employees with Disabilities (ICED) 2021 Outstanding Employee of the Year because we believe, as described above, he embodies all aspects of the nomination criteria:

- Outstanding commitment to excellence in his work performance proven by his ability to adapt and communicate.
- Epitomizes the core values of CMS and the commitment to accessibility and equity for all.
- Creates understanding of people with disabilities through his advocacy and ability to clarify accessibility needs and issues working with various agencies, groups, and organizations.
- Has assisted volumes of individuals seeking assistance, both current state employees and potential employees as the point of contact at the Diversity Resource Center.

CMS believes Brandon Singer epitomizes what a dedicated, committed, and determined state employee looks like when the truly believe in their work and are driven to be successful in completing it. The Disabled Workers Programs have risen to new levels of success and will only continue to develop and evolve with the efforts of Brandon Singer in his role as the Coordinator.

“Brandon works tirelessly to support the Disabled Workers programs that increase the number of qualified employees with disabilities working for the State of Illinois” according to **Katrina McCarver, Division Manager of Personnel of the CMS Examining & Counseling Hiring Reform Team**. “His tenacity and passion for these programs has been invaluable to their ongoing success.”

SAFETY CORNER

Winter Weather Preparedness



Winter weather in Illinois may be inevitable and being prepared will help you handle whatever weather hazards

Mother Nature throws our way this year. Knowing what to do before a disaster strikes can provide peace of mind and ultimately impact our recovery process.

To help Illinois residents be prepared for winter weather this year, the **Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA)**, the **National Weather Service (NWS)** developed this [Winter Weather Preparedness Guide](#) to help you and your family prepare for and stay safe during winter weather.

Preparing for winter also means adjusting your driving habits. Snowy or ice-coated roads and reduced visibility due to fog or blowing snow results in thousands of motor vehicle crashes every year in Illinois. Many of these crashes can be avoided by slowing down on city streets, rural roads and highways. Recent traffic studies have shown that many times, minor accumulations of snow or ice on roads can be just as dangerous for motorists as major snowstorms.

Proper home heating is a critical issue during the winter months, and over time has proven deadly for many families. Every year, more than 400 people die in the U.S. from accidental carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. According to the **Centers for Disease Control (CDC)**, approximately 20,000 people in the U.S. visit the emergency department each year due to

accidental CO poisoning. CO is found in fumes produced any time you burn fuel in cars or trucks, small engines, stoves, lanterns, grills, fireplaces, gas ranges, or furnaces. CO can build up indoors and poison people and animals who breathe it. Use this winter weather preparedness guide to educate you and your families about the dangers associated with this home heating hazard.

Keep in mind, being prepared for winter doesn't have to cost a lot of money or take a lot of time. It could be as simple as making sure your vehicle is in good winter driving condition, adding a winter survival kit to your car, changing your furnace filter at home and stocking or updating your family's emergency supply kit.

Family Emergency Supply Kit

A few important kit items are listed below:

- A battery-powered **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)** Weather Radio and a battery powered commercial radio and extra batteries.
- Foods that do not require cooking or refrigeration are best. Include high energy foods such as dried fruit and granola bars.
- Extra medications and special items for babies, the disabled or elderly.
- Extra water in clean containers.
- Flashlights and extra batteries. Do not use candles.
- A first-aid kit, non-prescription drugs and personal sanitary items.
- Pet supplies.
- Face mask, hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes

For more details, go to: [Ready Illinois - Emergency Kit](#)

BENEFIT CORNER Wellness Webinars



When Someone You Love Has Alzheimer's

Wednesday, November 3, 2021 from 12:00 – 1:00 PM CT



Join this webinar to:

- Identify the basic facts and course of Alzheimer's disease:
 - Symptoms;
- Coping and care-taking needs;
 - Treatment;
 - Recognizing effective ways of interacting and communicating with someone who has Alzheimer's; and
 - Identifying common mistakes family members make in interacting with someone who has Alzheimer's.
- Learn ways of helping your loved one to cope with behavior problems such as:
 - Grooming/bathing/cooking and other activities of daily living;
 - Memory problems;
 - Wandering; and
 - Agitation.
- Identify ways of coping with the severe stress associated with care giving for a loved one with Alzheimer's:
 - Getting help from family and care;
 - Adjusting your expectations and prioritizing your own health needs; and
 - Consider long-term care options.

[Click Here to Register](#)

COMPSYCH®
GuidanceResources® Worldwide

Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body

Tuesday, November 9, 2021 10:00 – 11:00 AM CT

Join this webinar to:

Learn about research in the areas of diet and nutrition, exercise, cognitive activity, social engagement and hands-on tools to help you incorporate these recommendations into a plan for healthy aging.

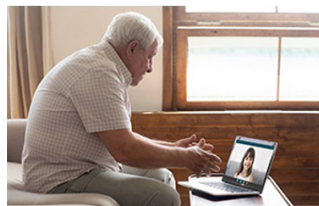


[Click Here to Register](#)

hally®
Brought to you by Health Alliance™

Caring from a Distance

Wednesday, November 17, 2021 from 12:00 – 1:00 PM CT



Join this webinar to:

- Identify the unique problems associated with caring from a distance:
 - Learn the emotional costs of caring from a distance;
 - Learn how to set reasonable expectations and to obtain support; and
 - Recognize that you are not alone in this situation.
- Identify how to create a care giving plan:
 - Learn how to properly evaluate the situation;
 - Learn how to research and analyze your options; and
 - Learn the process of making decisions.
- Identify the available resources for elderly adults:
 - Learn the role of adult day care, personal, house and medical care services;
 - Identify helpful tips for keeping in touch and monitoring the situation; and
 - Identify strategies for effective communication with your elder relative, family and local care givers.

[Click Here to Register](#)

COMPSYCH®
GuidanceResources® Worldwide



Treating and Preventing Diabetes

What is type 2 diabetes? Having type 2 diabetes means your body doesn't use insulin well and can't keep blood sugar at normal levels. Diabetes can lead to serious conditions such as heart disease, blindness and kidney disease. Common symptoms of Type 2 Diabetes are:

- Frequent urination;
- Increased thirst;
- Extreme fatigue;
- Blurred vision;
- Cuts or bruises that are slow to heal;
- Feeling hungry, even though you're eating enough; and
- Tingling, pain or numbness in your hands or feet.

Concerned about moving in the right direction, here are some things you can do to manage type 2 diabetes or stop it before it starts:

- Maintain your weight;
- Watch what you eat;
- Exercise regularly;
- Do not smoke; and
- Manage your stress.

Always check in with your doctor regularly and be sure to get any recommended screenings.

Brought to you by: 



For more information on the facts about Diabetes visit [here](#).

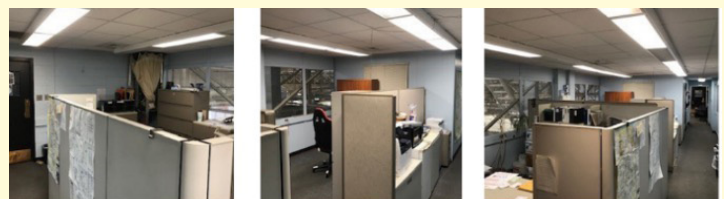
Useful links:

1. <https://www.aetna.com/health-guide/diabetes-resources-and-support.html>
2. <https://www.uhc.com/health-and-wellness/health-topics/diabetes>
3. <https://connect.bcbsil.com/diabetes>
4. <https://blog.healthalliance.org/diabetes-awareness-month-managing-your-diabetes/>
5. <https://www.humana.com/prevention-and-care/managing-conditions/diabetes/diabetes2>
6. <https://cvshealth.com/news-and-insights/articles/managing-diabetes>
7. https://www2qa.illinois.gov/cms/benefits/StateEmployee/BeWell/Documents/November2021/EyeMed_Managing_vision_while_managing_diabetes.pdf

BOAS - Fleet and BOPM!

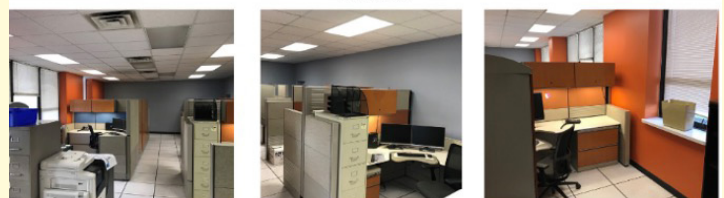
Shoutout to both BOAS-Fleet and BOPM for working together to get the improvements made in Central Garage in Springfield. The work was done by CMS tradesmen and the outcome is beautiful. See attached before and (finished) after photos. The following CMS Staff assisted with the Central Garage renovations:

CMS Chief Engineer: Brian Saxer; **CMS Grounds Crew Staff:** Jeff Parks, Gary Perkins, Ronald Vose, Eric Halberg, Thomas Daniels, James McKinney, Braden Begolka, Scott Osment; **CMS laborer:** Todd Knoles; **CMS Carpenter:** Brian Mulcahy, CMS Electricians: David Sekardi and Stephen Nowack, CMS Painters: Doug Payton and Tommy Jennings, **CMS Stationary Engineer:** Erik Kirby.



Before

Central Garage, Springfield Renovations



After

EVENTS CORNER

Native American Heritage Month

CMS is proud to celebrate Native American Heritage Month as we continue to commit to creating a welcoming and diverse workforce.

We are looking forward to the Statewide Recruitment Call with community leaders to discuss best practices in Native American recruitment. Members of our Native American Employment Plan Council also invite you to join these free events:

**First Nations Film and Video Festival
on Saturday, November 6th**

[For details and to RSVP click.](#)

**Sky Hopinka: Channeling Indigenous Histories
on Wednesday, November 8th**

[For details and to RSVP click.](#)



Upcoming

November 1

Chicago State University Virtual Fall 2021
Career & Internship Fair Week

November 11

Veterans Day

November 13

World Kindness Day

November 19

National Entrepreneur's Day

November 25-26

Thanksgiving

November 27

Small Business Saturday

CMS Celebrates Halloween

Anna Mason, Executive assistant, Director's Office. Anna with her 7yr old granddaughters, Bailee & Bristol.



Courtney Wick, Classifications Manager, Personnel. Courtney dressed as a haunted doll and went trick-or-treating with her nephew.



Terri Spann, Senior Benefits Analyst, Bureau of Benefits. Terri's mother wearing her witch hat. Terri's daughter, Airen, as Winnie the Pooh & Terri's stepdaughter, Christian, as Piglet.



MaCassa Johnson, Public Affairs Specialist, Director's Office. MaCassa's son Kamran was Covid-19.



Christie Rottman, Auto Liability Unit Manager. Christie and her family dressed up as characters from the movie Ratatouille.



Candice Famuwagun, Executive I, BOPM. Candice and her family.



Amber Spainhour, Assistant Deputy Director, Labor Relations. Amber's 8-year old niece Callie was Claudia from the Babysitter's Club



Colm Brewer, Chief Fiscal Officer, Bureau of Benefits.



Michelle Tallman, Assistant to Division Manager, Personnel. Michelle's son Cole and their scary pup, Maizey.

HAPPY VETERANS DAY



November 11, 2021

Veterans Day is a time to honor America's veterans for their patriotism and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good. **The Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS) salutes the contributions of our Veterans.**

Ross Shepard

Illinois Air National Guard
Master Sergeant ★ 21 years

Dona Acres

U.S. Army/Illinois Army National Guard
MSG/E8 ★ 23 years

Tad Rice

U.S. Air Force
E-4 ★ one term

Jeff Ayers

U.S. Marine Corps
Lance Corporal ★ 4 years

Bob Petty

U.S. Navy
Petty Officer 2nd Class
E5 Gunnersmate ★ 5 years

Tamiko Epting

U.S. Army
Sergeant ★ 6 years

Chris Newman

U.S. Navy
E-3 ★ 8 years

Jeffrey Sisson

U.S. Air Force
E6 Technical Sergeant ★ 20 years

Ron Wilson

U.S. Army
Specialist E-4 ★ 3 years

Amber Cornell

U.S. Army
E4 ★ 4 years

David Sekardi

U.S. Navy (active and reserve)
U.S. Army National Guard
E-7 (Navy) / E-6 (Army) ★ 20 years

Wilbert Harden

U.S. Army
Sergeant First Class ★ 25 years

Fred Jackson

U.S. Army
Private First Class ★ 6 years

Brent Fisher

U.S. Marine Corps
E-5 ★ over 6 years

Mary Kinser

U.S. Airforce
E4 ★ 3 years

Stephen Kendall

U.S. Army
Lieutenant Colonel ★ 31 years

Elizabeth Hynek

Illinois Air National Guard
E-5 ★ 6 years

Vernon Jakoby

U.S. Army
Lieutenant Colonel ★ 28 years

Cindy Brune

U.S. Air Force
E-5 ★ 10.5 years

Steven D. Davis

U.S. Navy CVN 71 Theodore Roosevelt
E-3 ABF ★ 2yr. active 6 yr. inactive

Jeffrey Meier

U.S. Air Force
Master Sergeant E-7 ★ 27 years

Brandon Buser

U.S. Air Force
Chief Master Sergeant ★ 29 years

Ross Pollina

U.S. Marine Corps
Gunnery Sargent ★ 21 years

Eric Halberg

U.S. Air Force
E-4 ★ 4 years

Brian Elam

U.S. Navy
ADAN ★ 4 years

Aaron Hardin

U.S. Army
SGT E5 ★ 4 years

Artric Robinson

U.S. Navy
E4 ★ 6 years



Office of the Director, Janel L. Forde (217) 782-2141

For more information on this newsletter or any other CMS initiatives, contact:

Wendy Butler, Director of Governmental Affairs (217) 785-1941